

What's New?

New Online Resource Available

The Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) is pleased to introduce a new online resource, a case summary of the Arizona Career Ladder Program. The case summary provides an overview of the program, including its development, operation, advantages, and lessons learned from implementation. In the process of developing the document, the author conducted interviews with state and district representatives who are familiar with the Career Ladder Program.

The state designed the Career Ladder Program to improve student achievement; motivate educators to improve skills; attract, recruit, and reward exemplary educators; and promote collegiality. One important feature of the program is that it allows districts the autonomy to adapt it to their specific needs so long as district programs meet the requirements specified in Arizona state legislation and rules of the State Board of Education. In total, 28 districts in the state participate in the Career Ladder Program.

The case summary examines three Arizona districts—Chandler Unified School District, Crane School District, and Flagstaff Unified School District—and their implementation of the Career Ladder Program. Through interviews and document review on the three districts, the case summary shares lessons learned:

- Meaningful use of data to inform and improve program components allows districts to continuously meet the needs of their teachers and students.
- Meaningful collaboration between unions and the district can develop a sense of investment in the success of an initiative.

- Maintaining a focus on both student and teacher learning is a crucial element to creating a culture that focuses on the investment of teachers and not on punishing them.
- Allowing districts to develop programs that fit their local contexts can assist in sustaining a reform effort and establishing stakeholder investment in the program.

The full Arizona Career Ladder Program case summary is available on the CECR website at http://www.cecr.ed.gov/pdfs/summaries/CECR_CS_NYC_PerfBonusProgram.pdf.

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Hot Off the Press

Schools Study Merit-Pay Options—

The Columbus Dispatch. June 19, 2011.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2011/06/19/schools-study-merit-pay-options.html?sid=101

The Ohio state legislature and multiple local school districts are debating the implementation of a statewide performance-based compensation program. The Ohio House of Representatives recently passed a budget that includes performance-based compensation measures; however, the Senate took the budget measure out. The article also mentions that three school districts, South-Western, Worthington, and Franklin, are considering alternative forms of teacher and administrator compensation independent of the proposed statewide system.

Sandoval Signs Education Reform Bills—

North Lake Tahoe Bonanza. June 15, 2011.

<http://www.tahoebonanza.com/article/20110615/NEWS/110619974/1061&ParentProfile=1050>

The governor of Nevada signed into law an education reform bill that replaces the traditional tenure system with a teacher performance evaluation system. The system includes a performance-based compensation component, and teachers will be eligible for awards based on positive student outcomes.

Douglas County Schools Revamp Teacher Pay, May Ask for Tax Hike—

The Denver Post. June 10, 2011.

http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_18244140

The Douglas County School District plans to update its current performance-based compensation system for the 2012–13 school year. The new system will base teacher pay on teaching students new skills for a high-tech workforce, student performance on statewide tests, and principal observations of teachers. Parents and students also will provide feedback on the teachers through a rating system.

Georgia Hires Team to Work on Teacher Pay Plan—

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. June 6, 2011.

http://www.ajc.com/news/georgia-politics-elections/georgia-hires-team-to-968437.html?cxttype=rss_news_128746

The Georgia Department of Education plans to hire consultants to help develop a new system to evaluate teachers based on student performance. The state also plans to consider options to tie teacher pay to the new evaluation system. Twenty-six school districts will pilot the new system during the 2012–13 school year before the system rolls out statewide.

Grantee Spotlight

Colorado Springs School District 11

Colorado Springs School District 11 (CSSD11) plans to use TIF Cohort 3 funds to implement a performance-based compensation system following The System for Teacher and Student Advancement, or the TAP System. CSSD11 recruited 10 of the highest need schools in the district to pilot the program during the grant period. CSSD11 teachers and principals will receive awards based on classroom and schoolwide student achievement and performance evaluations from observation rubrics. Teachers have additional opportunities to earn incentives through leadership roles in their respective schools.

Program Components

The CSSD11 program includes elements of the TAP System for teachers and principals.

Teachers receive awards based on three measures. The weight of these measures varies depending on whether a teacher is in a tested or nontested classroom. The evaluation system for teachers in tested grades and subject areas includes:

- Skills, Knowledge, and Responsibility (50 percent). CSSD11 determines score based on four observations per year.
- Classroom Value-Added Scores (30 percent). CSSD11 determines value-added schools using the Northwest Evaluation Associates: Measures of Academic Progress testing in reading and mathematics.
- Schoolwide Value-Added Scores (20 percent). CSSD11 measures schoolwide scores using the Colorado State Assessment Program.

Evaluation scores for teachers in nontested grades and subjects include:

- Skills, Knowledge, and Responsibility (50 percent). CSSD11 determines score based on at least three observations per year.
- Schoolwide Value-Added Scores (50 percent).

All teachers also are eligible for additional awards for taking on leadership roles, such as becoming a master or mentor teacher.

Principals receive awards based on:

- Schoolwide Value-Added Scores (50 percent).
- 360-Degree Evaluation. The principals' supervisors and the teachers/staff at their schools complete this evaluation (25 percent).
- TIF Building Leadership Team Evaluation. Evaluation based on the TAP System Leadership Review (25 percent).

The program also aligns with a coherent and integrated strategy for strengthening the educator workforce. In addition to performance-based compensation, the outcomes of teacher evaluation at the individual and schoolwide levels inform professional development for CSSD11 teachers.

Program Goals

Through implementation of the TAP System, CSSD11 aims to meet the following goals:

- Increase student achievement.
- Increase teacher and principal effectiveness ratings.
- Increase recruitment and retention of effective teachers and principals.

Program Incentives

CSSD11 plans to offer annual incentives up to **\$2,500** for teachers and **\$4,500** for principals. Teachers who serve as master and mentor teachers are eligible for an additional yearly stipend of **\$10,000** and **\$5,000**, respectively.

Recent Highlights of the Program

CSSD11 provides the following information about the TAP System on the Grants Office page on the district website (<http://www.d11.org/grants/>):

- Goals and objectives
- TAP rubric
- TAP master teacher responsibilities
- TAP mentor teacher responsibilities
- 2011–2012 TAP calendar

Contact Us



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The Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) was awarded to Westat — in partnership with Learning Point Associates, Synergy Enterprises Inc., Vanderbilt University, and the University of Wisconsin — by the U.S. Department of Education in October 2006.

The primary purpose of CECR is to support Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grantees in their implementation efforts through provision of sustained technical assistance and development and dissemination of timely resources. CECR also is charged with raising national awareness of alternative and effective strategies for educator compensation through a newsletter, a Web-based clearinghouse, and other outreach activities.

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